



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/2690
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:

Speech at Darwin Appeal sports dinner, Adelaide

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/2690

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, AT DARWIN APPEAL SPORTS DINNER.
ADELAIDE. 7.1.75.

Mr. Allen, ladies and gentlemen :

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak to you tonight.

I do so in a sense as a member of the supporting cast since I'm to be followed by two of the undoubted stars of Australian sport, John Newcombe and Neil Frazer - to whom we extend a very warm welcome.

But I do want first of all to acknowledge the generosity of the organisers and you, the patrons, for arranging that the proceeds should go to Darwin relief.

You will, I'm sure, all be delighted to learn that this is not, in fact, your last opportunity to help the people of Darwin.

The Lord Mayor's Appeal is being formally inaugurated tomorrow and your subscriptions to it will again be gratefully received.

It's an appeal that will I'm sure find a ready and generous response.

The Darwin cyclone was a tragedy that touched us all. But it was a tragedy illuminated by the heroism of some and the dedication of many.

The volunteer effort across the nation was enormous and magnificent.

So, too, has been the response to the various appeals launched so far.

The people of Australia have once again shown they can meet the severest test.

I think, too, that there's a lesson for Governments in the Darwin experience.

Disaster can strike anywhere, in many forms and with little or no warning - as again we've been tragically reminded this week.

The extent to which lives are lost or injuries suffered can depend very heavily on rapid co-ordination on the spot and quick response from local resources. The first few hours can be critical.

I think everyone in Australia will agree that the new Natural Disasters Organisation has done an absolutely superb job.

But I believe there is a complementary need for proper contingency planning on a State and local basis.

This is being undertaken in South Australia.

Last month -before the Darwin disaster - my Department was examining our capacity to cope with a major disaster.

This is an extensive enquiry. It involves some 20 Government Departments and authorities and bodies such as Red Cross, St. John's, State Emergency Services, Salvation Army and the Country Women's Association.

They are providing information on the resources they have available to meet emergencies, their location, response time, alert procedures, details of their own contingency planning, and so on.

This information - and we've asked that it be ready by the middle of next month - will be used to draw up an effective South Australian emergency plan to cope with various contingencies and to provide for its rapid implementation and co-ordination when needed. Of course many organisations, such as the Police, already have such contingency plans. Our aim is to see that they are co-ordinated as effectively as possible.

Obviously, almost by definition there is much that cannot be foreseen about a disaster. But there are measures that can be taken to ensure that the response is relevant and speedy. We intend to ensure that our response here is as good as it humanly can be.

The experience since Christmas shows that we have in South Australia, in both private and governmental organisations, people of the highest competence and dedication able and willing to meet such calls upon them.

And as this dinner shows we are also a community of people who respond generously to human need.

Thank You.

Mr. Allen, ladies and gentlemen :

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak to you tonight.

I do so in a sense as a member of the supporting cast since I'm to be followed by two of the undoubted stars of Australian sport, John Newcombe and Neil Frazer - to whom we extend a very warm welcome.

But I do want first of all to acknowledge the generosity of the organisers and you, the patrons, for arranging that the proceeds should go to Darwin relief.

You will, I'm sure, all be delighted to learn that this is not, in fact, your last opportunity to help the people of Darwin.

The Lord Mayor's Appeal is being formally inaugurated tomorrow and your subscriptions to it will again be gratefully received.

It's an appeal that will I'm sure find a ready and generous response.

The Darwin cyclone was a tragedy that touched us all. But it was a tragedy illuminated by the heroism of some and the dedication of many.

The volunteer effort across the nation was enormous and magnificent.

So, too, has been the response to the various appeals launched so far.

The people of Australia have once again shown they can meet the severest test.

I think, too, that there's a lesson for Governments in the Darwin experience.

Disaster can strike anywhere, in many forms and with little or no warning - as again we've been tragically reminded this week.

The extent to which lives are lost or injuries suffered can depend very heavily on rapid co-ordination on the spot and quick response from local resources. The first few hours can be critical.

I think everyone in Australia will agree that the new Natural Disasters Organisation has done an absolutely superb job.

But I believe there is a complementary need for proper contingency planning on a State and local basis.

This is being undertaken in South Australia.

Last month -before the Darwin disaster - my Department was examining our capacity to cope with a major disaster.

This is an extensive enquiry. It involves some 20 Government Departments and authorities and bodies such as Red Cross, St. John's, State Emergency Services, Salvation Army and the Country Women's Association.

They are providing information on the resources they have available to meet emergencies, their location, response time, alert procedures, details of their own contingency planning, and so on.

This information - and we've asked that it be ready by the middle of next month - will be used to draw up an effective South Australian emergency plan to cope with various contingencies and to provide for its rapid implementation and co-ordination when needed. Of course many organisations, such as the Police, already have such contingency plans. Our aim is to see that they are co-ordinated as effectively as possible.

Obviously, almost by definition there is much that cannot be foreseen about a disaster. But there are measures that can be taken to ensure that the response is relevant and speedy. We intend to ensure that our response here is as good as it humanly can be.

The experience since Christmas shows that we have in South Australia, in both private and governmental organisations, people of the highest competence and dedication able and willing to meet such calls upon them.

And as this dinner shows we are also a community of people who respond generously to human need.

Thank You.